

# Arkansas School-Age "LINKS"

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ASU Childhood  
Services  
Jo Ann Nalley,  
Director  
PO Box 808  
State  
University, AR  
72467  
870-972-3055  
1-888-429-  
1585

School-Age  
"LINKS"  
Was compiled  
and formatted  
by  
ASU Childhood  
Services

## When A Job Becomes a Profession: The Ten C's of Professionalism

By Roberta L. Newman

When someone asks you "What kind of work do you do?"....How do you respond? When asked that question, I used to fumble around and say something like...."Well.....I'm in.....child care." I always thought that response made it sound like I was enrolled in a program somewhere! I often talk with staff who struggle with how to define their work. Are they.....PROGRAM LEADERS? TEACHERS? YOUTH WORKERS? CAREGIVERS? COUNSELORS? SCHOOL-AGE SPECIALISTS? Or something else? Can the work we do with school-age children and youth during out-of-school hours be considered a *Profession*?

As someone who has visited hundreds of school-age programs across the country, it is clear to me that we do not yet have a clear vision of ourselves as "Professionals." Until we have that vision, we can't expect others to see us that way. All the signs indicate that we are an "emerging profession." Recent NSACA national conferences have featured pre-conference sessions for "emerging leaders," one sign that we're on the road to professionalism. On this road, each of us has a role to play in defining and shaping how school-age care is truly a professional endeavor.

What do we really mean by *professionalism*? Sometimes we think of *professionalism* in terms of *image*. Back in 1991, the American Child Care Foundation sponsored a national school-age conference. One of the participants was a federal government official with the Department of Health and Human Services. During a break, she told me enthusiastically that she thought the conference was marvelous because it was "so professional." She laughed and said, "I don't know what makes it feel that way.....maybe it's because everybody is wearing earrings!" Now it was true that everyone had gotten all dressed up to attend the conference, but both she and I knew that it takes a lot more than a "dressed-up" image to make a professional. Webster tells us that *professionalism* "is associated with tangible evidence of education, advanced degrees, and money!"



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In order to work effectively with others in the field, I have found it useful to create a working definition of *professionalism* in school-age care based on the general qualities and characteristics associated with being a professional in any field. I call my working definition the *Ten C's of Professionalism*. What follows is a brief overview of these *Ten C's*. They can serve as a useful tool for thinking about where you and your program are located on the road to professionalism.

### The Ten C's of Professionalism

- 1) COMPETENCE
- 2) CONFIDENCE
- 3) COLLABORATION
- 4) COMMUNICATION
- 5) CREATIVITY
- 6) CHANGE
- 7) COMPENSATION
- 8) COURAGE
- 9) COMPASSION
- 10) COMMITMENT

### COMPETENCE

*Competence* is certainly the basic building block in any profession. The development of *Competence* in school-age care presents two major challenges:

The first challenge relates to the relative *newness* of this profession and the fact that we are still trying

to refine our definition of the meaning of *quality* in this field. NSACA has made progress by developing national standards for quality and a national Accreditation program. Having a viable Accreditation system is an important first step to building a profession.

A second challenge is related to the scarcity of in-depth training opportunities, certificate, and degree programs aimed specifically at developing *competent* school-age care professionals. It is encouraging to see a growing number of networking conferences, college curricula and certificate programs, and distance learning programs all focused on developing a field of *competent professionals*. The continued growth of these opportunities and an increased dialogue on *Credentialing* are critical if we are to develop consistent standards related to *Competence*. It can be argued that a system for *Accrediting programs* is incomplete without a companion system for *Credentialing* individuals who work in programs and are responsible for implementing quality standards. In most professions, formal *Credentials* for individuals provide evidence that an individual has achieved a high level of *Competence* in the field. An accredited hospital cannot be operated without credentialed physicians and nurses who have demonstrated they know what they are doing. Recognizing this, many regions and states are

developing their own credentialing systems, some independently, and some with assistance from the Department of Defense which has taken a leadership role in this area since the early 1990's.

On the road to professionalism, it is up to each of us to define, stimulate, encourage, and insure *Competence* and *Professionalism* in each of our programs and organizations by focusing carefully on two areas:

1. Diligently searching for the best available people for the job. Providing the best possible resources for pre-service and in-service training and support.

The Search. As we plan the search for potential school-age professionals, it's essential to define what we're looking for in order to find the "best picks." As I talk with school-age leaders across the country, they tell me that *competent staff* have the following *qualifications*:

- Knowledge of school-age, family, and community development.
  - Knowledge of school-age programs or a related field.
  - Experience working with children in a group setting that is informal in nature - recreation, camps, other child and youth programs.
- Special skills and interests to share with children.

In addition to *qualifications* related to education and experience, school-age leaders say they look for staff with the

following *qualities*:

- A genuine liking for school-age kids and an ability to relate naturally and comfortably with kids of both sexes and different cultural, racial, and economic backgrounds.
  - Sensitivity to the *out-of-school needs* of school-age kids.
  - Capacity for common sense and good judgment.
  - Energy and enthusiasm.
  - Ability to handle and respond to simultaneous demands for time and attention.
  - Ability to see and bring out the best in each child - interest in working with both *difficult kids* and *easy kids*.
  - Good sense of humor.
- Capacity for flexibility, patience, and understanding.

Once you know what you're looking for, it's important to make a comprehensive recruitment plan. And it's important to design a set of targeted interview questions, specifically keyed to job descriptions - open-ended questions that ask *What would you do if.....? How would you handle this situation?*

Training Support. A training program that builds and supports professional *Competency* includes:

- a thorough orientation.
- an ongoing in-service training program tailored to the needs and characteristics of adult learners and an emphasis on key topics such as those identified in NSACA standards - relationships, environment,

health and safety, guiding behavior, involving kids in planning, connecting with community resources, to mention a few.

- Time for planning.
- Time for problem solving and peer support.
- Time for resource sharing and networking.
- Time and support for attending outside training opportunities.

## CONFIDENCE and COLLABORATION

Effective supervision and evaluation are the tools we can use to develop the skills that make *Confidence* and *Collaboration* possible.

Supervision Strategies. Supervision that fosters *Confidence* and *Collaboration*:

- Provides clear, *written* statements and discussion of the program's vision, philosophy, goals, and objectives, emphasizing a commitment to excellence.
- Develops clear, fair, and consistent policies and procedures that support program goals and involve staff in ongoing development and review.
- Encourages staff to share ideas, feelings, and feedback.
- Notices and acknowledges good work and good ideas.
- Gives objective, constructive feedback and handles problems and concerns with tact, sensitivity, and confidentiality.

- Individualizes supervision based on the staff person's experience and needs, strengths and weaknesses.
- Takes staff concerns seriously and responds to them fairly and directly.
- Provides visible, *hands-on* management that serves as a role model for staff.

Evaluation Strategies. Programs that use evaluation as a tool for building professionalism typically assess staff performance in areas such as:

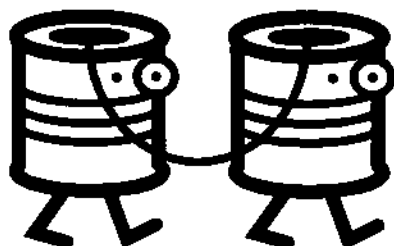
- Communication
- Relationships
- Accountability
- Planning, Preparation, and Implementation of Activities
- Group Management Skills and Skills for Guiding Behavior
- Responsiveness to Children's Individual Needs
- Skills in Using Diverse Roles such as Group Leader, Facilitator, Observer, Mediator, Helper, or Participant
- Initiative and Resourcefulness
- Flexibility
- Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution
- Basic Job Requirements
- Family Involvement
- Community Connections

Evaluation helps staff become more *Competent* and *Competence* builds strength and self-confidence from within. The better we feel about ourselves and our capabilities, the more willing we

are to work and collaborate with others.

### COMMUNICATION

In many ways, *Communication*, is the axis of all the other C's. Without effective *Communication*,



we can't fully exhibit our *Competence*. We can't demonstrate our *Confidence*. We can't *Collaborate* well with others. Our ability to *Communicate* well can make us or break us. It can open doors or close them. The way we *Communicate* with others can be our most valuable public relations tool or our worst public relations nightmare. We need to speak and write effectively in many different ways - clearly, passionately, persuasively, gently, and powerfully. And we need to remember that we are always *Communicating* by the way we present ourselves to children and youth, parents, colleagues, school personnel, and other key players in the community. While it may be appropriate to wear jeans and a sweatshirt when working and playing with kids, the same attire is probably not the best choice for a meeting with a school principal to negotiate space, or for an appointment with a potential funder of the program. Like it or not, how we dress can affect the

way others perceive our level of professionalism, especially among those in power who often downplay the importance of our work by writing it off as "*kids' play*."

### CREATIVITY and CHANGE

Most of us think of *Creativity* as a positive quality. However, *Change* is a different story. *Change* can be difficult and many people would just rather live without it, if that were possible. And yet, *Creativity* and *Change* go hand in hand. Both are critical to school-age care, because without them, our programs would lack both the spontaneity and flexibility that school-age kids require. *Creativity* is the essence of professionalism - where we really can take hold and make things happen, make things *Change* for the better. How do we do it? What can you do if you don't think you're creative? The good news, is *Creative* behavior can be learned and developed. Here are some *Creativity Boosters* for SAC professionals inspired by advice from Dr. Roger von Oech, who has earned a national reputation as a creativity consultant to the business world:

#### 1. Avoid the Right Answer Trap.

A good way to be more creative is to look for the *second right answer* to difficult problems. According to von Oech, the *first answer* that comes to mind is just too easy, too automatic, too mechanical. Often the really

*Creative* idea is just around the corner. For example: The *first right answer* to increasing the amount of supplies and equipment for our programs might be to raise parent fees. What are some other *right answers*? The *first right answer* to chaos caused by a disruptive child might be to place the child in time out - what's the *second and third right answer*?

2. Be playful with the way you phrase questions. The answers you get depend on the questions you ask. Ask open-ended questions that make people think. For example:

"What are three school-age child care issues that you feel absolutely neutral about?"

"What are three things about your program you would change tomorrow if you were in charge?"

"What are three things you think staff should NEVER do in your program?"

"What are three things you think staff should do EVERY DAY?"

#### 3. Use analogies to help you get a fresh slant on concerns and problems.

Analogies can be especially useful in communicating with parents, the general public, the media, or policy makers and others who may not be knowledgeable about the field. To create an awareness and understanding of the wide range of skills and abilities needed by

school-age professionals, you might use analogies to compare their work with another demanding profession. My personal favorite is.....

*Being a school-age child care professional is a lot like being an Air Traffic Controller - you have to know who's coming in for a landing, who's in a holding pattern, who's experiencing turbulence, who's running out of fuel, who's on a collision course, and who's been sitting on the runway much too long!*

A SAC program leader once told me she thought working in school-age care was like working as a stand up comic - "You have to have a good routine, a great delivery, and an ability to deal with hecklers without losing your'cool!"

You can learn a lot about the level of professionalism in your colleagues and your program by playing with analogies. Try asking your co-workers to describe your program by using an analogy.

#### 4. Challenge the rules.

Remember that rules should be based on reasons that make sense. As time passes, things change. Our original reasons for rules may no longer exist, but we often get stuck in the rules and continue to observe them. To avoid getting stuck, make it a regular practice to ask yourself and your colleagues

*"Why did this program, project, concept, or idea come to be? Do these reasons still exist?"* If the answer is NO, some *Creative Change* is in order.

5. Set aside some time each day or each week to ask "what if" questions. Think about where the following "what if" questions might lead you:

*What if.....The nation's aging airline fleet was recycled into school-age child care centers?*

*What if.....All community newspapers had a child care section that was as big as the sports section?*

*What if.....All school-age programs were "For Profit" centers that paid annual stock dividends to child care workers?*

*What if.....Large corporations donated excess frequent flyer miles to school-age programs so that staff would have free flights to training conferences?*

*What if.....Robin Williams, Madonna, Whoopie Goldberg, Oprah Winfrey, Michael Jordan, Jacques Cousteau, Queen Elizabeth, George Bush, Hillary Clinton, Colin Powell, Jennifer Lopez, and Katie Couric were all kids again and showed up in your program tomorrow?*

Remember if you want to be more professional, believe in the worth

of your creative ideas and be persistent in pursuing them.

### COMPENSATION

It's no secret that child and youth workers are among the lowest paid workers in America. Some of you may be aware of child care studies that indicate that wage levels are the main predictor of quality in child care. And yet, few school-age wage levels represent the



wage due a professional. This often causes bitterness, resentment, and staff turnover. Even though wages are low, however, I believe it is up to us as individuals and programs to create an image and a reputation for professionalism that will help others SEE what we do as a service deserving higher levels of *Compensation*. NO ONE is going to do this for us. And no amount of blaming of society's values, parents' attitudes, the media's lack of understanding, the government's misplaced priorities, or employer's greed, is going to make the difference. It is through building and developing ourselves as professionals that real gains will be achieved. In the meantime, as we are emerging as professionals

in the area of *Compensation*, we need to find additional ways to supplement the wages of school-age staff to keep them in the field. We must create additional incentives which include benefits; increased voice and responsibility for shaping program design and implementation; acknowledgements and award systems; released time for training, consulting, and participation in professional organizations; paid tuition and registration fees for training and education; and bonuses.

### **COURAGE, COMPASSION, and COMMITMENT**

*Courage, Compassion, and Commitment* are the final BIG THREE C's of Professionalism.

## The Big Three C's

Professional *Courage* means we are willing to take on advocacy roles, to be creative and energetic as we face up to the problem areas of this field, to write letters to the editor and political representatives on behalf of children, youth, and their families, to speak up at public hearings to discuss support for school-age programs. *Courage* makes it possible for us to view problems and conflicts as opportunities for growth and development, rather than shying

away from them. With *Courage*, we use our knowledge and experience to become leaders in our communities - to think and do what needs to be done, even when it's very difficult, challenging, and sometimes, risky.

*Compassion* lives in the hearts of school-age professionals. It allows us to be respectful and non-judgmental, and to continually expand our understanding and acceptance of all those we serve.

Finally, a conscious, inspired *Commitment* means that we find ways to stay focused on the important work we do each day as school-age professionals. We hold ourselves accountable for our words through dedicated, relentless pursuit of high quality performance for ourselves and our programs. When we are doggedly committed to the critical importance of the work we do, we have the power to change things for the better and we stay the course.

Sometimes, people ask me "How will we know when we've really become professionals?" I know I became one when I started believing it myself. I used to struggle with words when people asked me that old "So, what do you do?" question. Now I tell them without hesitation: "I am a professional who develops quality out-of-school programs for children and youth. I urge you to create an affirmation that describes the professionalism in your work. Then, speak it often - silently and publicly - as you work

with others to build a profession truly worthy of our children, youth, and their families.

Roberta Newman is an experienced school-age professional and nationally recognized speaker, trainer, and author of books and videos on school-age care and related topics. Two of her recent books *Training new After School Staff*, *Building Relationships with Parents and Families*, and *helping children and Youth with ADD Succeed in After School Programs* contain additional program ideas and tips for managing transitions successfully. For more information, see Roberta's Web site at [Newroads-Consulting.com](http://Newroads-Consulting.com)

## Arkansas Children's Week

Building A Strong  
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April 2-8, 2006

Visit [www.state.ar.us/childcare](http://www.state.ar.us/childcare)  
for more information



By Kathy Hermes

*Our program definitely has kids from all income levels. It's pretty obvious who has all the up to date toys, clothes and gadgets. We need some ideas of what to do that will equalize the kids, so they can all come from the same place and do something valuable together--- where the clothes, toys and gadgets don't matter.*

This is a common issue that many programs, school and families deal with. It's a good sign that you recognize that it can create a divisive situation with negative impact on your program. You have an opportunity to deal with this "problem of too much" by focusing on it in a productive way. Here is a three pronged strategy that can create an environment where what children have or don't have doesn't matter. Using *policies, activities and service learning* will help children to recognize and value the things that are most important to them.

## Policies

Rules can be a great equalizer. Have rules about what kinds of

## POLICY

### Personal items allowed at school

- Small inexpensive toys
- Items that cost less than \$100.00
- Anything you don't mind being broken

toys and personal items can come to the program. Programs that do not allow handheld computer

games, etc. find that having rules relieves the pressure to show off. Ask the children for their suggestions about what things should be allowed at the program. Have them help create guidelines for any personal items that they bring. Are there certain times designated for bringing special belongings? Perhaps on a day off school, or an early dismissal day everyone could bring a favorite item. Make sure there are limits about what is not allowed at any time. One program director has a rule that if it costs more than \$100 it is not allowed. Many a sad child with furious parents has suffered when something valuable disappears or is broken. There is always a chance that this might happen in the rough and tumble world of school age children.

## Activities

Program activities can help children see each other as individuals of value, not related to the things they have, their status or circumstances. Activities that require teamwork or accomplishing a group goal create a common ground. Here is an activity that focuses on the difference between children's needs and wants. It is hard for children to distinguish between the two and having this discussion can be very enlightening to children who think they *need* everything. Allow 15 - 30 minutes for this activity. Using chart paper with the heading "Needs", ask children what they need in their lives and make a list of everything they mention. In-

clude everything suggested, without comment. Have another piece of paper ready with the heading "Want". After the list is completed, go through each item and ask the children to explain why the item is necessary. This will be a dynamic discussion! It will become clear that they don't need everything, but want some of the things. Have them come to agreement (majority rules will work in this case) about which items to move over to the "Want" list. Explain that needs and wants change over time and can be different in some situations. Be satisfied when they get the idea and begin to see that needs include things like shelter, relationships, food, etc. You don't have to reach agreement about each item. If you'd like you could divide the list into three parts and divide into three small groups for discussion.

## Service Learning

Through the ages people have looked out for each other. Volunteerism is unique to the American culture and is something we can



be proud of. Being of assistance is also shown to provide positive benefits to the helper. Volunteer-

ing allows the helper to step out of a "me-focused" existence and give freely of his or her time and talent. The result is the positive feelings of having made a valuable contribution that in some small way improves the world we all share. School Age Care programs are in a unique position to provide service. Programs have the time to develop a project, carry it out and reflect on the benefit of their volunteer effort. Volunteer activities can be included in the program on a regular basis through the year, and children can develop new skills and discover new interests during the process.



Many service-learning activities require going away from the program site. These are certainly worth the effort and provide children with exposure to the community. They can learn about citizenship, government, community services and neighborhoods through service. For many programs it is not possible to take field trips or leave the program site. These are many excellent onsite opportunities for service, as well. Three Internet-based service organiza-

tions offer excellent projects and activities that will engage both children and adult's interest.

*Learning to Give* (<http://learningtogive.org>) is a website that offers lesson plans, activities and resources to educate youth about the power of philanthropy. There is a section for youth workers with activities for 7-11 year



olds and for older youth.

*Do Something* ([www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org)) has service activities for children and youth. There is a kids tsunami relief fund, including fund raising ideas.

*Kids Care Clubs* (<http://www.kidscare.org>) is dedicated to developing compassion and the spirit of charity in children. This organization provides children, families, schools, and religious groups with meaningful opportunities to help others in their local and global communities. You can set up an affiliated club in your program. The site sponsors monthly projects and features clubs each month. This past month the project was collecting old cell phones to donate to charity needs.

Make service a regular part of your program, not just an activity done once a year and forgotten. Talk with the children about what they might want to do that could be an ongoing commitment. This might include picking up trash of the grounds of the meeting place, planting flowers, making tray favors for hospital meal trays, organizing a recycling campaign, making posters with environmental tips, etc.



Doing these things will help children see that underneath all of the stuff we accumulate, we are much more alike than different. Different income levels, different family situations, different races, different values don't matter when kids are working together on a project or sharing ideas about what they believe. Creating a culture of respect is the best thing you can do to provide a program where everyone feels welcome.

Kathy Hermes is Senior Program Coordinator at Camp Fire USA National Headquarters and an independent contractor. She has been involved in a school-age care since 1980 in a variety of roles. As a trainer, director, educator and consultant, she has developed a training program and curriculum. She received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees at Kansas State university in Human Development and Family Life.



# Your BIG Backyard

9

**By Jennifer Harris**

Spring is a time for children to learn about the natural world around them and for adults to help foster in children, a sense of wonder and excitement of the many things that co-exist with us here on this planet. Sometimes the best place to begin our outdoor adventures is in our own BIG backyard. Whether you want to consider your backyard to be at your program site, your city, state, country, continent, or even the PLANET, there is much to be discovered and explored. Here are some great ways to begin your adventure!



Earth Day is April 22, 2006 and is marked as a special day when we can all take the time to learn more about our environment and make a promise to always take care of it as best as we can by being Earth-friendly. School-age children are eager to advocate for things that are important to them and for many children, preserving the planet is an important cause they are willing to take action for. If there is not an aluminum can recycling program at your school or in your program, consider starting one! Simply purchase a few rubber trash cans with lids and paint them with catchy slogans that signify the importance of recycling. Cut a

hole (the size of the soda can) in the trash can covers to prevent other objects from being collected. Place them near machines located in teacher's lounges, school cafeterias, etc. What an easy project to help the environment and possibly generate some money for your program! If you don't have space at your program to do this, contact a local business and see if you can collect their cans.

Earth Day also reminds us that there are other items around us that we can recycle and then re-use in group projects. For example, recycle plastic soda bottle by making a set of bowling pins for the children to play with. By filling 10 bottles with sand or water, you can create your own bowling alley right at your program. No need for a field trip! You can create multiple sets and set up many lanes too. For less experienced bowlers, let the children create barricades that can act as bumpers to help out others. You can even take the bowling game outside and enjoy the beautiful outdoors as you roll a STRIKE!

Don't miss out an opportunity to read *The Lorax* by Dr. Suess and discover the importance of spreading the word about being a friend to the trees and other living things. After reading this book, children will be enthusiastic about planting their own seeds. You can encourage this by starting a mini window sill garden or if the weather allows, till a garden plot and plant the seeds directly outside. Don't forget to make plant markers so that you know what is popping up once the seed germinate and begin to grow!

Looking for an easy way for the children to spread the word about Earth Day in your community? Simply contact your local grocer and ask them if you can borrow a lot of paper grocery bags. Have the children decorate them with Earth Day 2006 slogans, catchy recycling mottos, etc. and give them back to the grocer for use on Earth Day or throughout that week. Another option is for the children to create catchy posters that address issues like pollution, recycling, energy and water conservation, etc. Hang the posters in local businesses, around their schools, etc. What a great way for children's voices to be heard in their community and to share their creativity with others at the same time!

Did you know that April 28th is Arbor Day? Arbor Day is a nationally-celebrated observance that encourages tree planting and care. What a great way to help children demonstrate optimism and kindness, a labor of love, and a commitment to stewardship by planting a tree. Contact a local nursery to see if they would be willing to donate a tree to your program for children to plant or consider joining the "The National Arbor Day Foundation" where for



only \$10 your program will be sent 10 free trees that are suitable for your climate and are guaranteed to grow. For more information and other great activity ideas, visit "The National Arbor Day Foundation" on the web at <http://www.arborday.org>. If you and your children love a good book, don't miss out on an opportunity to read *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. This book offers an affecting interpretation of the gift of giving and the acceptance of another's capacity to love in return.

These are just a few activities to try with school-age children that can help everyone serve as stewards to the environment. Let's work together to make the efforts we put forth on these special holidays last all 365 days of the year!



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**Tuesday, May 23, 2006**

**6:00-9:00 PM**

**ASU Childhood Services**

If interested, please contact Woodie Sue Herlein, School-Age Program Coordinator at (870) 972-3055 or 1-888-429-1585.

### Arkansas Early Childhood Professional Development Registry

#### LOOK NO FURTHER!

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- **Access to verified trainers** that have experience training adults, working with children, and education in their field
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## Games!

*Spring is her and the weather is questionable for outdoor play! Why not try some of these indoor games to keep your school-agers happy. If you have a nice sunny day. . .take the game playing outside!*

### Johnny Went to Sleep

Players stand in a circle. The first player says, "Johnny went to sleep." The group asks, "How did Johnny go to sleep?" The first player says, "Johnny went to sleep like this," and does a motion. The group responds "Like this?" And repeats the motion. Play continues to the next person in the circle, who says, "Johnny went to sleep. . ." but after the second player gives her motion, the group responds with "Like this" and repeats the first motion, then the second motion. This continues with every player adding a new motion.

### Hazoo

Players form two lines facing each other. One person must walk down the middle of the two lines without laughing. Players in the line must try to make the person laugh or smile. They can try anything, but are not allowed to touch the player.

### Chef Salad

Players stand in a circle and each player is given the name of a vegetable found in a salad, such as lettuce, carrot, radish, onion, etc. Give the same veggie name to several people in the circle. "It"

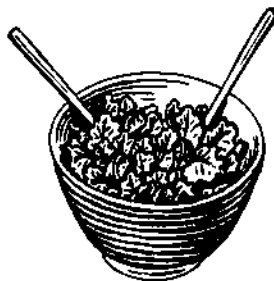
stands in the middle and calls out a vegetable (or combination of veggies.) Those vegetables run into the circle and change places. "It" tries to find an empty space in the circle. The person left without a space is the new "It."

"It" may also call out "Chef Salad" and everyone must change places.

**Variation:** This game can also be played using a parachute and lifting the parachute when each vegetable is called-players must then run under the parachute.

### Jamackwack

Divide group into two teams. Team A are the **Jamackwack** birds-they can only walk in reverse. Team A players must bend over, hold on to their ankles, close their eyes and walk backwards. Team B holds hands to create a fence. When the Jamackwacks are in position with their eyes closed, a gate is opened by two players dropping their hands. The **Jamackwacks** must find the opening by walking around the fence. The fence cannot move. When a Jamackwack finds the opening, he will call out to his Jamackwack friends, "Wack, Wack," to let them know where the opening is. Team B can do nothing to stop the Jamackwacks escaping, except they can sing very loudly to drown out the call of the Jamackwack. Songs can be fun



kids' songs like "Old MacDonald" or pop tunes from artists like the *Backstreet Boys* or *Britney Spears*!. **(Suggestion:** Try a practice run of this game with the staff to "get the idea." Kids will love it, but don't forget. . .when do we stop playing a game? When the kids are having the most fun!

### Spoons

Players sit around a table with one person as the dealer. Each player receives four cards. Place spoons in the middle of the table-one spoon less than the total number of players, not counting the dealer. Play begins and dealer passes the cards one at a time to the person on their right. Player either chooses to keep the card and discard one of his to the next player or pass the same card on. The object of the game is to have four of a kind in your hand. When a player has four of a kind, she takes a spoon, trying to retrieve the spoon slyly. As soon as a spoon leaves the center of the table, everyone must grab a spoon. The player without a spoon is out.

All the spoons are placed back in the middle-minus one. Cards are reshuffled and dealt again, and play continues until there is one spoon champion left.



### Game Resource

[www.puzzlemaker.com](http://www.puzzlemaker.com) allows you to select a specific type of puzzle (e.g. word search, crossword,

cryptograms, word jumbles, etc.). Then you can type in the words or phrases you wish to include, plus a title for your puzzle. The computer does the rest and creates the puzzle.



You can add hidden messages or other clues. Great tools for specific themes or school curriculum helpers for your homework area.

On April 25, 1901, cars in the United States were required to have license plates.

Design your own license plate for your dream car. Are they personalized? What would they way?

Make you own plate out of cardboard.

See if you can find pictures of license plates from around the U.S. Make a matching game out of them.

Next time you are taking a field trip, try to find the letters of the alphabet in each plate.

## Paper Snakes

This snake is easy to make –all you need is an old newspaper and a pair of scissors.

Unfold your page of newspaper and cut two strips of paper just alike from the longest edge. Now taper the



ends of the strips so the snake will have a tail. Younger children will want to use a wider strip, which will make a shorter snake, but it will be easier to complete. The older children will want to make a longer, thinner model.

To fold the snake, start at the wide ends of the strips. Hold the strips at right angles to each other and lap the end of one strip over the other. Fold the strip on the bottom up and over the top of strip. Continue folding the bottom strip over the top in the same manner until all the paper has been folded (strips will alternate being on bottom). Now stretch the snake out gently. Make his face and decorate as you like.

## Mosaics

### Materials Needed:

Indian corn, pumpkin seeds, squash seeds, acorn tops, glue.



### What to do:

Some children might like to draw their designs on paper first. Glue corn, seeds, acorn tops to paper or other firm material.

## School-Age Training

### Specialist Certificate Emphasis Area

| City               | Location                                   | Date                     | Time         |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------|
| Benton<br>Module 1 | First United Methodist<br>200 North Market | Monday,<br>Apr. 3, 2006  | 6:30-9:30 pm |
| Benton<br>Module 2 | First United Methodist<br>200 North Market | Monday,<br>Apr. 10, 2006 | 6:30-9:30 pm |
| Benton<br>Module 3 | First United Methodist<br>200 North Market | Monday,<br>Apr. 17, 2006 | 6:30-9:30 pm |
| Benton<br>Module 4 | First United Methodist<br>200 North Market | Monday,<br>Apr. 24, 2006 | 6:30-9:30 pm |
| Benton<br>Module 5 | First United Methodist<br>200 North Market | Monday,<br>May 1, 2006   | 6:30-9:30 pm |

## School-Age Regional Workshops

| City        | Location   | Date                       | Time            |
|-------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Bentonville | Tiger Athletic Complex<br>Conference Room<br>1702 Southeast J Street | Thursday,<br>Apr. 27, 2006 | 6:00-9:00<br>pm |